



Testimony, Veterans Affairs Committee, February 17, 2015

My name is Robert Beamon. I am an executive board member for Corrections Employees Local 391 of Council 4 AFSCME, a union of 32,000 public and private employees. I am also an active member of the CT Army National Guard with 18 years of service and serve as a Commissioner on the City of Hartford's Veteran Affairs commission and a state corrections officer.

We strongly support House Bill 6390 AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY LEAVE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES. This bill will provide a more equitable pay for state employees who are serving our country in the military.

The average military reservist is scheduled for 22 weekend days of drill and 14 annual training totaling 36 days per fiscal year. Most employers only allow for 7 days of paid military leave and the required 2 weeks in the summer are not taken into account.

The Department of Corrections allows for 17 total days of paid military leave, the remainder are taken as military leave without pay. In both the service member is losing a considerable amount of income.

In DOC, we work a 5 and 3 schedule. We are required to work weekends and state employees on a 7 and 2 are not in most cases. The 5 and 3 employees almost always use all the allotted paid military leave days. Therefore to meet their service obligation these employees must suffer the loss in income.

Many of the younger service member state employees are lower paid. They are also usually lesser in service rank. Their service pay is low. Now that there is a draw down of troops it will be especially difficult for these folks to rise in rank and military pay.

If each employee was granted 36 days for "normal" reserve duties this would eliminate the hardship that military members are forced to endure for serving their country.

There is already language that covers additional duties for military members. The basic number of required military days should be covered.

I want to thank the committee for considering this bill. I would be happy to provide any further information. Thank you for your consideration.